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ASSOCIATION MEETINGS.

THE NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE.

The seventeenth annual meeting of the National Civil Service Reform League held at Cincinnati, December 16 and 17, 1897, came at a time when its proceedings would be followed carefully by friend and foe because of the congressional attack led by General Grosvenor. Delegates from nearly all the Eastern and Middle States and from some of the Southern States were present.

The first day's session was devoted to the meeting of the executive and general committees, to the reading of the secretary's report, and the report of the condition of civil service reform in the several states.

The secretary of the league, Mr. George McAneny, submitted with his report an "Open Letter to the Hon. C. H. Grosvenor, in Reply to Recent Attacks on the Civil Service Law and Rules," containing a refutation of that congressman's inaccurate statements regarding the civil service law and its enforcement.

The reports from the several states were more or less favorable. Mr. Woodruff declared that Pennsylvania's hands were tied by Senator Quay, but that public opinion was gradually being aroused in favor of reform. Mr. Ela, of Chicago, predicted that the Supreme Court of Illinois would uphold the Chicago reform act, in which event the civil service system would be given a fair test. Since the meeting the Illinois Supreme Court has sustained the law.

Mr. Rodgers, of Buffalo, stated that the reformers of New York would use every legitimate means at their command to defeat Governor Black's attempt to "take the starch out of" the New York law, Mr. Bonaparte, of Baltimore, assured the delegates that the recent defeat of the civil service reform law proposed for Maryland was the best thing that could have happened, as the measure was drawn with the express purpose of defeating true reform. Mr. Foulke, of Indiana, in commenting upon the proposed legislation in Congress affecting civil service reform, stated that he did not think it probable that any serious adverse legislation would be enacted.

On Thursday night Hon. Carl Schurz delivered his annual address as president of the League. Mr. Schurz, in his lucid, simple and convincing way, presented the whole case for civil service reform in such a manner that this address will hereafter be the

source to which all who seek arguments for the purpose of conviction, as well as of refutation, must have recourse.

It is impossible, within the limits of this note, even to attempt a summary. But it is due to President McKinley, whose conduct as a civil service reformer since his inauguration was highly praised, and in whose public utterances the members of the League place the utmost confidence, to quote what President Schurz said of him.

"True to his honor as a gentleman, to his vows as a Republican, and to his duty as President of the United States, Mr. McKinley stoutly held his ground against the fierce foray which was set on foot to overwhelm him. It may be said that to resist pressure, especially pressure from party friends aiming at a wrongful object, is the first and most obvious duty of the head of a state, and that its simple performance does not call for extraordinary praise. But when faithfully performed against unusual urgency, as in this instance, it deserves a tribute of gratitude, and this tribute should be heartily paid to President McKinley by every true friend of good government."

In its declaration of principles the League demands of every Republican senator and representative a faithful fulfillment of his party's pledges to enforce the present federal civil service law and to extend its operation wherever practicable; it recognizes in President McKinley's non-removal order, except for good cause and after actual notice, a wise and just measure, and demands its fair trial; it further demands that the merit system be applied in the Census Bureau.

The League likewise renews its previous declarations in favor of the repeal of the four-year tenure of office act, the extension of the merit system to the consular service. It expressly disclaims any advocacy of civil service pensions as a part of the merit system, which contemplates pensions no more than did the system of appointment and removal by favor; on the contrary, an assured tenure during efficiency should enable public servants, by exercise of frugality and forethought displayed by all prudent persons, to provide for the ordinary contingencies of age and infirmity.

The several papers that were read at the public meeting on Friday, December 17, were exhaustive and contained much important matter. The subjects and the writers can only be given here. "The Merit System in Municipal Reform," Dr. Albert Shaw, New York; "The Republican Party and Civil Service Reform," Hon. Henry Hitchcock, St. Louis; "The Democratic Party and Civil Service Reform," Hon. Moorfield Storey, Boston; "The

Legal Situation, the Right to Compete for Public Employment," Edwin Burnett Smith, Esq., Chicago; **"Do the People Want Civil Service Reform?"** Charles J. Bonaparte, Esq., Baltimore; **"The Municipal Situation in Ohio,"** Hon. Rufus B. Smith, Cincinnati; **"The Merit System in the Program of Municipal Reform,"** Horace E. Deming, Esq., of New York City.

Hon. Carl Schurz and Mr. George McAneny, of New York, were unanimously re-elected president and secretary of the League for the ensuing year, and Boston was selected as the next place of meeting.

The Women's Club entertained the delegates at luncheon Friday noon, and Friday night the visiting delegates were tendered a banquet by the Cincinnati Municipal Civil Service Reform Association, at which the Hon. Wm. H. Taft, Judge of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, presided. There was a large attendance, and one of the features was the presence of delegates from the leading local labor organizations, one of whom responded to the toast, **"Organized Labor and Civil Service Reform."** It seems that the laboring men are awakening to the importance of the civil service reform movement and are enlisting themselves in its behalf.

The League will have at Washington, during the present session of congress, a committee which will watch all legislation that in any way tends to weaken the force of existing civil service law, and which will assist the friends of the law in congress to withstand hostile attacks.

In the language of President Schurz, "It seems that the rapid progress of the merit system has put its enemies in a desperate state of mind, and that seeing their case in deadly peril they have resolved to rally their whole force for a final effort. The hour has come for them to do or die." * * * "Can our victory be doubtful? The enemy being desperate the struggle now before us may be bitter and arduous. Grant's Wilderness campaign of 1864 was the bloodiest of the civil war. But when it began the rebellion was in fact already broken and doomed. Whoever still fights for the spoils system sacrifices himself for a lost cause. The final victory cannot fail to be with sound democratic principles, reason and civilization."

MAX B. MAY.

Cincinnati.

AMERICAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION.

The tenth annual meeting of the American Economic Association was held at Cleveland, Ohio, on December 29, 30 and 31, 1897.

The meeting was held in connection with the annual meeting of the American Historical Association.

On account of the absence of the president of the Association, Professor Henry C. Adams, in Europe, the usual presidential address was omitted. The first vice-president, Professor Franklin H. Giddings, of Columbia University, presided over the meetings and made a short introductory address of welcome at the first session.

This session was devoted to the discussion of the "Relation of the Gas Supply to the Municipality." Hon. Carroll D. Wright, of Washington, D. C. Commissioner of Labor, gave an account of the investigation which is now being made through the Department of Labor into the cost of producing gas throughout the country. He was followed by Hon. Elroy M. Avery, of Cleveland, who pointed out the difficulties which beset all investigations of this nature. Professor John Henry Gray, of the Northwestern University, of Evanston, Ill., read a carefully prepared paper which dealt with the work and experience of the State Board of Gas Commissioners of Massachusetts.

The evening meeting was held jointly with the American Historical Association, and the program was under the charge of that organization. The question considered was the "Opportunities for Advanced Studies of History and Economics" offered in the various countries of Europe. The discussion was conducted by Professors H. Morse Stephens, of Cornell University; Abbott, of the University of Michigan, and C. H. Hull, of Cornell University.

The session of Thursday morning, held jointly with the American Historical Association, was in special charge of the American Economic Association. The program consisted of a paper on the "Relation of Rate-Making to Taxation," presented by Professor Arthur T. Hadley, of Yale University and a discussion on the "Teaching of Economic History" which was conducted by Professors H. B. Gardiner, of Brown University; H. R. Seager, of the University of Pennsylvania, and G. W. Knight, of the Ohio State University.

At the afternoon session of the same day, Thursday, Professor Taussig presented a statement of some results of a recent inquiry into taxation in Massachusetts. This was followed by a discussion of the "Methods of Teaching Economics," conducted by Professors A. T. Hadley, of Yale University; R. Mayo-Smith, of Columbia University and F. M. Taylor, of the University of Michigan.

The session of Friday morning was devoted to a discussion of the proposals for the reform of the currency. The leading speakers

were Professor F. W. Taussig, of Harvard University, and Mr. Horace White, of New York. General A. J. Warner, of Ohio, the well-known advocate of silver, made an interesting contribution to the discussion which followed.

Ample provision was made by the hospitable people of Cleveland for the entertainment of their visitors, and the social incidents which form so important a part of these gatherings were particularly pleasant.

At the meeting of the council it was decided, after much discussion, to revive from time to time, as occasion might seem to establish, standing committees for the discussion of special questions and the presentation of reports to the Association. This revives, after a fashion, the standing committees which were instituted at the origin of the Association, but which had ceased to exist.

The officers elected for the ensuing year are as follows: President, Professor Arthur T. Hadley, Yale University; vice-presidents, Professors H. B. Gardiner, Brown University, John H. Gray, Northwestern University, and Winthrop M. Daniels, Princeton University; secretary, Professor Walter F. Willcox, Cornell University; treasurer, Professor Charles H. Hull, Cornell University.